

Dow Kokam Testimony

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Kristina Schnepf

Public Affairs Director, Dow Kokam

Creating a growing, thriving electric vehicle industry in the current global environment, requires the building of an entire national ecosystem. It took decades to develop the current internal combustion engine ecosystem, that we are now attempting to supplement, and in some cases replace, with an electric vehicle ecosystem in just years. The speed at which we necessarily require that ecosystem to evolve, and to reach the level of meeting driver expectations is intense.

I'm sure that all of us, during some of the major technology shifts of the recent past recall thinking things such as, "I can't imagine having an actual computer of my own. There are computer labs and libraries after all. Why would I ever need or want one of these in my home?" Or more recently, "How could I possibly eliminate my own personal home phone line and replace it with my cell phone only?" There are interesting, personal shifts in behavior and thinking that have, of course, over the last several decades become commonplace.

Electric vehicles, however, represent something even more personal, to most American's anyway, than their personal computing or their home phones. We are talking about our cars here. And we in Michigan in particular have a relationship with and a level of dependence on our vehicles. Our vehicles have become an extension of who we are and how we get things done. And an entire ecosystem for purchase, maintenance, fueling and service has been built up, over decades, around it.

Between battery manufacturing, vehicle manufacturing, charging infrastructure, utility readiness, and service capabilities, our challenge for the electric vehicle industry is to ensure unwavering success for the ambitious early adopters and to make the switch easy for those only considering an EV today. And we must do this, not over the next several decades but over the next several years. Not because it is the next cool technology that can stretch the limits of our productivity, or provide us with the next cool gadget, but because this industry is of critical importance to our country and our state on so many levels

From their ability to significantly reduce environmental impact, to revitalizing our manufacturing base in the US and Michigan, to reducing our dependence on foreign oil, support for the creation of the necessary ecosystem for electric vehicle success is a "must do" for this legislature.

Each of us has a role. Some of us are relentlessly building the best battery capability, others are designing and building next generation vehicles, others are transforming our current energy